

So thou would'st smile, and take me in thine arms.
 The sight of London to my exil'd eyes
 Is as Elysium to a new-come soul;
 Not that I love the city, or the men,
 But that it harbours him I hold so dear—
 The king, upon whose bosom let me die,¹
 And with the world be still at enmity.
 What need the arctic people love starlight,
 To whom the sun shines both by day and night?
 Farewell base stooping to the lordly peers!
 My knee shall bow to none but to the king.
 As for the multitude, that are but sparks,
 Rak'd up in embers of their poverty;—
*Tanti;*² I'll fawn first on the wind
 That glanceth at my lips, and flieth away.

Enter three Poor Men

But how now, what are these?

POOR MEN. Such as desire your worship's service.

GAV. What canst thou do?

1ST P. MAN. I can ride.

GAV. But I have no horses.—What art thou?

2ND P. MAN. A traveller.

GAV. Let me see: thou would'st do well

To wait at my trencher and tell me lies at dinner time;

And as I like your discoursing, I'll have you.—

And what art thou?

3RD P. MAN. A soldier, that hath serv'd against the Scot.

GAV. Why, there are hospitals for such as you.

I have no war, and therefore, sir, begone.

3RD P. MAN. Farewell, and perish by a soldier's hand,
 That would'st reward them with an hospital.

GAV. Ay, ay, these words of his move me as much

As if a goose should play the porcupine,

And dart her plumes, thinking to pierce my breast.

But yet it is no pain to speak men fair;

I'll flatter these, and make them live in hope.— [Aside.]

You know that I came lately out of France,

¹ Dyce emends to *lie*. *Die* may be used in the sense of "swoon."

² So much for them.



Sylvester, Camden, Earl of Dorset. Jonson, Donne. Raleigh, Earl of Southampton.



Stow, Beaumont Fletcher, Bacon. Shakespeare. Sir Robert Bruce Cotton, Dekker

Shakespeare and His Friends

From the painting in the Corcoran Gallery, Washington

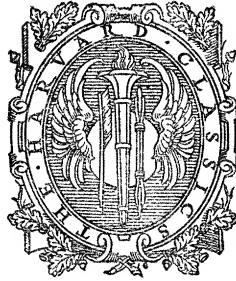
THE HARVARD CLASSICS
EDITED BY CHARLES W ELIOT LL D



ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

VOLUME I
MARLOWE · SHAKESPEARE

WITH INTRODUCTIONS, NOTES
AND ILLUSTRATIONS



"DR ELIOT'S FIVE-FOOT SHELF OF BOOKS"

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

A SKETCH of the life and work of Christopher Marlowe will be found prefixed to his play of "Doctor Faustus" in the volume of the Harvard Classics containing Goethe's "Faust."

The precise date of "Edward II" has not been determined, but it is generally and plausibly assigned to 1590-91. The historical basis for the plot Marlowe found in the Chronicles of Fabyan, Stow, and Holinshed, especially the last. In its treatment of the facts of history, this play is a typical example of the class of drama known as the "chronicle history," which flourished in the last two decades of the sixteenth century, and culminated in Shakespeare's "Henry IV" and "Henry V." While the order of events in history determines for the most part the succession of scenes, the author condenses, omits, elaborates, and re-arranges in order to gain dramatic effectiveness, and to bring out the character of Edward and the results of his weakness. Thus the action covers a historical period of some twenty-two years, though no such stretch of time is suggested by the play; the military operations in Ireland and Scotland, and especially the battle of Bannockburn, are antedated in order to connect them with Gaveston, who was, in fact, dead before any of them occurred; and the adherence of Spencer to the king is made to follow immediately, instead of several years, after the death of the earlier favorite.

Yet, with all this freedom in the handling of details, Marlowe succeeds in giving a substantially true, as well as a powerfully affecting, picture of the character and fate of Edward II. The play is the ripest and most masterly of Marlowe's productions, showing in the delineation of character, the construction of the plot and the freedom and variety of the verse, a striking advance over his earlier work. Nowhere else does he rival so closely his great successor, Shakespeare.

"The reluctant pangs of abdicating Royalty in Edward furnished hints which Shakespeare scarcely improved in his 'Richard the Second'; and the death-scene of Marlowe's King moves pity and terror beyond any scene, ancient or modern, with which I am acquainted."

CHARLES LAMB.

EDWARD THE SECOND

[DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

KING EDWARD THE SECOND.	BALDOCK.
PRINCE EDWARD, his Son, afterwards King Edward the Third.	BEAUMONT.
EARL OF KENT, Brother to King Edward the Second.	TRUSSEL.
GAVESTON.	GURNEY.
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.	MATREVIS.
BISHOP OF COVENTRY.	LIGHTBORN.
BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.	SIR JOHN OF HAINAULT.
WARWICK.	LEVUNE.
LANCASTER.	RICE AP HOWEL.
PEMBROKE.	Abbot, Monks, Herald, Lords,
ARUNDEL.	Poor Men, James, Mower,
LEICESTER.	Champion, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.
BERKELEY.	QUEEN ISABELLA, Wife to King Edward the Second.
MORTIMER, the elder.	Niece to King Edward the Second, daughter to the Duke of Gloucester.
MORTIMER, the younger, his Nephew.	Ladies.]
SPENSER, the elder.	
SPENSER, the younger, his Son.	

[ACT THE FIRST]

[SCENE II]

Enter GAVESTON, reading on a letter that was brought him from the King

Gaveston.

“MY FATHER is deceas'd! Come, Gaveston,
And share the kingdom with thy dearest friend.”
Ah! words that make me surfeit with delight!
What greater bliss can hap to Gaveston
Than live and be the favourite of a king!
Sweet prince, I come; these, these thy amorous lines
Might have enforc'd me to have swum from France,
And, like Leander, gasp'd upon the sand,